

PLUG IN: AN UNCOMMON COMMUNITY

Scripture used: [Matthew 28:18-20](#) and [Ephesians 1:21](#) (NIV)

OVERVIEW

In the message today, Pastor Hurmon reflected on the identity of NBCC as an uncommon community with deeply shared values. All churches are called to be greatly committed to the great commission and the great commandment, paraphrasing the words of Pastor Rick Warren. We share that goal, and God has additionally called NBCC to be uncommon in its expression of God's heart for all people, particularly in our diversity which concretely reflects that everyone does, in fact, matter to God. In our church, we enter into partnership with one another, and partnership with God. Our uncommon community rests on a common vision and shared values.

[Philippians 1:4-5](#) introduces us to the Biblical concept of partnership. All who follow Jesus and trust in Jesus are members of His church across the world, but those who are active in ministry at NBCC are partners because we are working together for the sake of God's kingdom. We also gather in many different ways. Anytime two or three are gathered in the name of the Lord, Jesus has promised to be present also ([Matthew 18:20](#)). In this message, Pastor Hurmon shares about the common vision and shared values of our church, and the practical ways we all can grow in our relationship with God together.

KEY POINTS

1. **We are committed to reach those who feel far from God.** We are never really far from God, as God is pursuing each one of us with His love. But we may feel that we are distant and removed from God when we are hurting, lonely, forgotten, and disappointed. NBCC is committed to being a church where everyone can find a loving embrace, forgiveness, redemption, inspiration, and hope.
2. **We make disciples.** We equip people to live and love like Jesus. We strive to make disciples of all nations, all "*ethnos*". Diversity is both a gift and a core strength. Everybody matters. We may not agree on everything, but we all matter greatly, and we are challenged to grow because we can learn from each other in our different stories and backgrounds.
3. **We build families.** [Psalm 68:6](#) - God sets the lonely in a family. The US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy wrote a powerful book on the loneliness epidemic in the US, which is a true public health crisis. Across all ages and stages, NBCC is intended to be an extended family, a safe place where, because we all acknowledge we desperately need God's grace, we can be honest about where we are struggling.
4. **We transform communities.** Within our church, we are transformed as we become more like Jesus. See especially the unique culture of [Matthew 28:17](#) (NIV): we may experience both worship and doubt, and Jesus draws near and works with our doubts. As we follow Jesus, we are also committed to transforming the communities around us.
5. **How do we know that we are spiritually growing?** This brings us back to the story of the "Young Ruler" who asks Jesus "What is the greatest commandment?" And Jesus replies that the young ruler must love God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and love his neighbor as himself. As we grow, we should be growing towards "all," and that means we will be growing in trust in God, growing in commitment in our actions and choices that reflect our faith, and growing in love as it reflects God's heart of compassion, generosity, and care.
6. **What practices should we undertake?** We should engage regularly with practical teaching that helps us live out the Word of God (see [James 1:22](#)). And, we should grow in practicing spiritual disciplines of generosity, prayer, fasting, and time in God's Word.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What is the best community (or maybe a team), church or otherwise, that you've been a part of? What made it special?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider the Great Commission of [Matthew 28:18-20](#), and the four vision areas of NBCC. How do you experience your own life connecting with the Great Commission? How would you describe the purpose statement of your life? How could a community help you to fulfill God's calling on your life? How do you see your purpose connected to the purpose(s) of those around you?
- 3) **DO** - Reflect on whether God is calling you to be better "plugged in" to a church community like NBCC. What are you looking for? If there are things that you feel are missing, could you be a part of the solution?